vacation to Old Tehri Town has become imperative before diversion tunnels T-3 and T-4 closed in order to make available the dry area for the construction of the stilling basin of Tehri HE Project Stage-I (1000 MW). Due to closure of these tunnels the portion of Old Tehri Town lying at lower levels would get submerged during the non-monsoon period and the entire town could be submerged during the monsoon period.

With the coming into being of the State of Uttaranchal in November, 2000, the matter of shifting of Old Tehri Town is receiving the attention of the State Government and the diversion tunnels T-3 and T-4 are now envisaged to be closed in October, 2001 after which a period of about 18 months would be required to complete the works of stilling basin.

Commencement of first unit of Tehri Jal Vikas Nigam

†406. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the target for commencement of first unit of Tehri Jal Vikas Nigam has been fixed for December, 2002;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the public agitation which took place few days back, opposing the closure of T-3 and T-4 tunnels was a sponsored act because of actual work is lagging behind the schedule;

(c) whether in these circumstances the target is achievable;

(d) if not, whether Government propose to identify the persons responsible for the same and take action against them; and

(e) by when this work is going to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (e) The first unit of 250 MW of Tehri HE Project Stage-I (4×250 =1000 MW) was scheduled for commissioning in March, 2002, has been rescheduled because of non-closure of diversion tunnels T-3 and T-4. Closure of these diversion tunnels is required to make available dry area for

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

construction of stilling basin. This could not take place as envisaged in October, 2000 and also on 30th March, 2001 on account of non-vacation of Old Tehri Town consequent to the agitations resorted to by the local population. The shifting of Tehri Town paving the way for closure of Tunnels T-3 and T-4 is now receiving the attention of the State Government of Uttaranchal and these tunnels are now proposed to be closed in October, 2001 following which about 18 months are required to complete the work of spillway and stilling basin.

Permitting power producers to sell power directly to the consumers

407. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:
SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA':
SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission has recommended that power producers be permitted to sell power directly to consumers;

(b) whether the Central Electricity Act as of now does not permit sale of power by producers to consumers directly but only through the SEBs and if so, whether the centre is planning to amend the Central Electricity Act to that extent;

(c) whether such a move to permit power producers sell directly to consumers will obviate the need for guarantees and counter guarantees; and

(d) whether such a move will also end the monopoly hitherto enjoyed by SEBs in distribution of power without enforcing commercial norms and evading accountability?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission has not recommended the sale of power by the power producers directly to the consumers.

(b) to (d) As per Section 43A(1)(c) of the Electricity (Supply) Act,